

## GUIDE TO WRITING THE PRT GRANT PROPOSAL

The following points of reference can be used by any PRT as a means of preparing for the annual grant application. Writing objectives and action plans for the grant that take into account regional or district data can serve as a framework for review and discussion during PRT meetings and activities throughout the year. It is very important that all PRT members participate in the grant writing process to ensure that all constituents are represented in the identification of gaps and barriers and development of proposed activities.

### **Data Gathering**

Prior to meeting and grant writing, the existing regional data sources must be pulled together for Team review and consideration. These sources may include but are not limited to:

- Referral numbers – number of referrals versus percentage of verifications
- Referral sources – who is making referrals and who isn't, why
- CAPTA referrals versus percentage of verification
- Other CONNECT data and trends
- NSSRS Child Count – October 1st report to NDE
- Family Survey results – choose potential activities from the Family Improvement Activities list
- MDT procedures – are all domains addressed, are tools used appropriate and valid for the kind of information that is needed
- Gaps/barriers identified during the year and at the Annual Meeting
- Training records
- Child outcomes – Results Matter process, IFSP/IEP development
- CAP – Correction Action Plan from IFSP/IEP file review findings
- ILCD action plans and improvement activities
- Timelines, continuous services, and other compliance requirements
- Availability of services and resources
- Settings and practices where services are provided
- Transitions: Part C to Part B; home to community settings
- PRT self-assessment and any subsequent follow-up
- Previous year's grant – unfinished items, items worth repeating
- Previous year's use of funds – were they all utilized effectively and budgeted properly

### **Team Planning**

Prior to bringing PRT members together to discuss the priority areas for the grant application, it will be helpful to have the planning region chairs/co-chairs, lead agency representatives, etc. develop an agenda to facilitate discussion. Consider inviting any other program, agency, and district representatives or other stakeholders who have input or access to data about the status of supports and services for children and families birth to age five. Keep in mind the need for any accompanying materials which might be helpful in guiding the meeting discussion.

### **Hold a Meeting**

Gather all PRT members as well as other community and regional stakeholders/interested parties. If necessary, review the PRT function and responsibilities with the group to ensure that all participants

understand their role in the discussion. Although a few members may take the lead in drafting the grant application, all participants should have the opportunity to assist in clarifying the priorities. Many PRT's have found it useful to hold this type of discussion either as a part of, or following the Annual Preschool Meeting at an annual grant writing retreat.

- Meet with the PRT to review the data that was collected.
- Discuss projects of interest and need to the region.
- Develop partnering plans with local agencies, consider: Early Head Start/ Head Start, ECPDP/Regional Training Coalitions, Early Childhood Endowment Grant holders, DHHS local office staff – specifically waiver and children/family services staff, Migrant Office Recruiters/Directors and Indian programs, Early Childhood mental Health providers, WIC, Dental/Medical Clinics and Hospitals and other relevant agencies in the region.
- Consider use of small groups to develop proposed objectives to present to the team for feedback.

## **Writing Objectives, Actions and Evaluations**

### *General Comments*

- The Grant has been divided into four main priority areas/goals: Public Awareness and Outreach; Training, Skill Building and Technical Assistance; Services Coordination Support; and Improving Learning for Children with Disabilities (ILCD) and Services Coordination Quality Assurance. Under each of these priority areas the CoLead Agencies have provided examples of items that teams may consider. These are examples. You do not need to write an objective for each of these ideas. Your PRT may have other ideas that are not listed.
- Write multiple **objectives** under each goal that meet the specific needs of the region. Write **actions** that are specific and measureable steps to be taken to meet the objective. There may be several actions that would help to fulfill an objective. Include strategies that have already proven to be successful. An **evaluation** should be done to determine the effectiveness of the action. Consider any change that has occurred in the data not just if the action was carried out.

### *Membership*

- Review the team membership requirements. If all categories are not filled, an objective should be written about how the team can find people to fulfill these rolls on the team. What other agencies in the community are not being represented – how can you connect with them?

### **EXAMPLE**

**OBJECTIVE:** Recruit a Child Care representative to serve on the PRT.

**ACTION:** The public awareness committee will visit the home and center-based child care providers in the community by November 1, will share awareness materials with them and will talk with them about serving on the PRT and what their contribution can do to help children in the community.

**EVALUATION:** New membership on the PRT.

*OBJECTIVE:* Recruit clergy to serve on the PRT.

*ACTION:* John and Jane will visit five churches by November 1, will share awareness materials with them and will talk with them about serving on the PRT and what their contribution can do to help children in the community.

*EVALUATION:* New membership on the PRT.

### **Public Awareness and Outreach**

- Look at agencies with low referrals rates and make a plan to target them.
- Consider activities in the community that would be good venues for distributing information.
- Plan events to stay connected with Protection and Safety/Children & Family Services workers.
- Think outside the box for ways to reach under-served populations: minority, homeless, mobile, low-income, Indian.
- Consider what literature and awareness items the PRT would like to purchase.
- Look at the need for interpreters and translation of materials.

### **EXAMPLE**

*OBJECTIVE:* Increase community and provider awareness of EDN services to assure that every child entitled to the benefits of the system will have access to services.

*ACTION:* The PR Committee will disseminate EDN materials to hospitals, clinics, dentist offices, ophthalmologists, mental health agencies, child care providers, and churches.

*ACTION:* The PR Committee will attend community health fair, county fair, Week of the Young Child.

*ACTION:* The lead agency staff will maintain the local EDN Website.

*ACTION:* The co-chair will purchase pens and tote bags for distribution by December.

*EVALUATION:* An increase in referrals rates and/or increase in the number of kids receiving services.

*OBJECTIVE:* Promote effective working relationships with Protection and Safety workers.

*ACTION:* Services Coordinators will attend DHHS staff meetings, interagency team meetings, LB 1184 county Treatment Team meetings.

*ACTION:* Services Coordinators will attend Helping Babies From The Bench workshop.

*ACTION:* The PR Committee will provide books for judges to disseminate to families.

*EVALUATION:* Services Coordinators will be in attendance at stated meetings and a documented increase in DHHS referrals.

### **Training, Skill Building and Technical Assistance**

- Consider surveying providers, Services Coordinators, administrators, parents, and team members to determine what their training needs may be. Look at gaps and barriers to help determine needs.

- Talk with the EC Professional development partnership/Regional Training Coalition representative about upcoming training plans in the area and the PRT needs.
- Talk with the ECTC about available training topics.
- Review potential activities from the Family Improvement Activities list based on the PRTs scores on the Family Survey.

### **EXAMPLE**

*OBJECTIVE:* Provide pertinent and timely trainings to all EDN audiences.

*ACTION:* In November, provide training on Social-Emotional Development to service providers and parents.

*ACTION:* In September, submit document to the ECTC requesting free training on Cultural Responsiveness.

*ACTION:* Pay expenses for Services Coordinators to attend all state sponsored training.

*EVALUATION:* Document training dates, topics and number of attendees. Ask Services Coordinators to share what they learned at trainings.

*OBJECTIVE:* Support Professional Development Partnership trainings.

*ACTION:* Assist with advertising and promoting trainings, provide needed supplies, and pay stipends for parents to attend.

*EVALUATION:* Document training dates, topics and number of stipends.

## **Services Coordination Support**

- Talk with the Services Coordinators and the supervisors in the region about the support and assistance that they will need in the coming year.
- Review gaps and barriers from the Annual Meeting and PRT meetings.
- Consider potential activities that can be done in collaboration across agencies.
- Discuss data that could be reviewed from CONNECT.
- Research the reason some families decline services coordination.

### **EXAMPLE**

*OBJECTIVE:* Continue to support Services Coordinators to maximize their effectiveness with families, local and state agencies, service providers, school districts and other Services Coordinators in the region.

*ACTION:* Support Services Coordinators by working with area psychologists to examine a variety of social emotional screening instruments to determine effectiveness and promote their use to the Early Intervention Teams.

*EVALUATION:* Districts will document results of social emotional instruments.

*ACTION:* Increase staff capabilities of using CONNECT and creating reports by attending a CONNECT training.

*EVALUATION:* Staff attends at least one CONNECT training during the year and develops the skills to run a variety of reports.

### **Improving Learning for Children with Disabilities (ILCD) and Services Coordination Quality Assurance**

- In addition to reviewing the data to identify needs, consider surveying school districts and Services Coordinators to determine information that they would like to review or training that they need.
- Consider file review findings and any Corrective Action Plans.

#### **EXAMPLE**

*OBJECTIVE:* Assist each school district in meeting the 45-day timeline for each family.

*ACTION:* At the January meeting, the Training Committee will provide districts with legitimate and not legitimate reasons for exceeding the 45 days.

*ACTION:* In January, develop and disseminate a suggested timeline for the district process of handling referrals.

*ACTION:* At the January meeting, provide information about general best practices including appropriate tools, MDT makeup, parent communication, etc.

*EVALUATION:* All districts in the region meet the 45-day timeline all of the time.

*OBJECTIVE:* Support each school district in providing continuous services.

*ACTION:* As a resource for districts, compile and disseminate in April contact information for providers willing to provide summer services.

*ACTION:* In January, the Training Committee will provide examples of legitimate and not legitimate reasons for decreasing services.

*EVALUATION:* Two early intervention team meetings are held during the year and information is shared.

### **Complete the Grant Application**

- The objectives, actions, evaluations and other needed information are entered into the template within the NDE Grant Management System (GMS). Be sure to make a plan for how this written document can be used and reviewed throughout the year.